

Message Text

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STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MASS, ML, UV

SUBJECT: MALI/UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE

REF: A) STATE 005463; B) STATE 006820

1. DEPARTMENT IS RIGHT IN GIVING FULL CREDENCE TO YAGUIBOU'S ASSERTION THAT GOUV, HAVING BEEN CAUGHT SHORT ONCE, DOES NOT INTEND TO LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN. BY HOOK OR BY CROOK, UPPER VOLTA WILL SEE TO IT THAT IT HAS THE CAPABILITY TO DEFEND ITS BORDERS. THE SURGE OF NATIONALISTIC FEELINGS GENERATED BY THE DEEP HUMILIATION FELT BY ALL VOLTANS AS A RESULT OF THE DECEMBER BORDER INCIDENTS, IS NOT LIKELY TO DIE DOWN UNTIL VOLTAN ARMY HAS REGAINED CONTROL OF THE AREA CLAIMED BY MALI.

2. TO ACHIEVE THIS, THE BIG PROBLEM FACING PRESIDENT LAMIZANA IS, OF COURSE, THE PROCUREMENT OF ARMS. GOUV IS CONVINCED THAT FRANCE HAS NO INTENTION OF HELPING UPPER VOLTA ACHIEVE MILITARY PARITY WITH MALI. VOLTANS GENERALLY DISMISS THE USSR AND CHINA AS BEING WHOLLY ON THE MALIAN SIDE. IN DESPERATION, THEY HAVE TURNED TO US.

3. WHILE NOT WISHING TO SOUND PAROCHIAL, AND BEING WELL
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AWARE OF PROBLEM PRESENTED TO USG BY YAGUIBOU'S REQUESTS,

I WONDER WHETHER TYPE OF COMMERCIAL SALE DESCRIBED PARA 1 REF (A) COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS LEGITIMATE ONE FOR PURPOSE OF MUNITIONS CONTROL EXPORT LICENSE, EVEN WITHIN CONTEXT OF MALI-UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE.

4. IF WE ARE PROVIDING MAP TRAINING AND PARACHUTES TO MALI, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING FOR UPPER VOLTA AS WELL. GOUV'S REQUEST TO US LAST SEPTEMBER FOR EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING OF AN ENGINEERING COMPANY (OUAGA 1997) HAS REMAINED UNANSWERED EVEN THOUGH, IF MY RECOLLECTION IS CORRECT, WE HAVE DONE IT FOR MALI IN THE PAST. SAME APPLIES TO REQUEST FOR 2500 FIELD UNIFORMS (OUAGA 2572). GIVEN PRESENT MOOD HERE, I AM AFRAID THAT OUR REFUSAL TO ISSUE EXPORT LISCENSE FOR ARMS FOR WHICH UPPER VOLTA IS READY TO PAY CASH WOULD BE REGARDED HERE AS AN UNFRIENDLY ACT. NOTHING (EXCEPT PERHAPS ITS INABILITY TO PAY CASH) IS PREVENTING MALI FROM DOING THE SAME THING. IN THIS CONNECTION, AND IN ANTICIPATION OF POSSIBLE QUERIES, I WOULD APPREICATE IT IF THE DEPARTMENT COULD MET ME KNOW WHY MALI IS ELIGIBLE FOR FMS CREDIT WHILE UPPER VOLTA IS ELIGIBLE ONLY FOR CASH SALES.

5. AS VIEWED FROM HERE BY THE VOLTANS, IT ALMOST APPEARS AS THOUGH THE FRENCH, THE SOVIETS, THE CZECHS, THE CHINESE AND EVEN OURSELVES HAVE EAGERLY SOUGHT TO MAKE MALI A RELATIVELY STRONG MILITARY POWER. BEFORE THE DECEMBER INCIDENTS, ONE COULD WONDER ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF SUCH A MILITARY BUILD UP. NOW, OF COURSE, VOLTANS ARE CERTAIN THAT THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THE MALIAN BUILD UP WAS TO ATTACK UPPER VOLTA AND THEY BLAME THE FRENCH, THE SOVIETS AND THE CHINESE (BUT NOT YET THE US) FOR IT. AT THE SAME TIME THE VOLTANS FEEL THAT ALL THESE POWERS ARE NOW GANGING UP TO PREVENT THEM FROM ACQUIRING THE ARMS THEY NEED IN ORDER TO FACE WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE MALIAN AGGRESSION.

6. FRANKLY, IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I DO NOT RELISH THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING TO EXPLAIN TO PRESIDENT LAMIZANA THE REASONS WHY WE CANNOT ALLOW UPPER VOLTA TO PAY CASH
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FOR M-16 RIFLES AND AMMUNITIONS. I DO HOPE THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL FIND IT POSSIBLE TO ISSUE THE EXPORT LICENSE FOR THIS LIMITED SUPPLY OF ARMS WHICH, I BELIEVE, SHOULD POSE NO REAL THREAT FOR THE MALIAN ARMY.
GRAHAM

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